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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: IRAQ CONSTITUTION TERROR; BAGHDAD

¶1. SUMMARY: The major themes in the daily newspapers on July 24 were the presidency council's meeting, Al-Jafari and Talabani's meeting with the American ambassador, the constitutional committee's preparations for the referendum, drafting the constitution, and the developments of the security situation. END SUMMARY.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- ¶A. "Constitution and the political demands" (Al-Adala, 7/24)
¶B. "Epidemic of the century" (As-Sabah, 7/24)

SELECTED COMMENTARIES

- ¶A. "Constitution and the political demands" (7/24)

Al-Adala (affiliated with SCIRI) published a third-page editorial by Ali Khalif about the constitution:

"The constitution is almost finished and the terrorists are afraid. They are so afraid that they assassinated three Sunni members of the constitutional committee.

Those Sunni members wanted to help maintain the unity of Iraq. That is why they were killed. These three martyrs will join the other martyrs that have died trying to save Iraq. They will all be the Martyrs of Iraq and we honor them by not giving in to these terrorists. We must continue to move forward and successfully finish the constitution.

However, some Sunni groups say they will not participate in process of drafting the constitution unless they can achieve their political demands. I think that these demands have nothing to do with drafting the constitution. I also believe that they should have submitted their political demands to the government and then let the government do its job.

The terrorists tried to prevent our Sunni brothers from participating in the elections and now they are trying to prevent them from participating in drafting the constitution. Neither of which helps Iraq. The terrorists have threatened to kill any Sunni who participates in the constitutional process. They regard the Sunni members of the constitutional committee as apostates. For this reason, our Sunni brothers must continue to work on the constitution. They must not give in to these terrorists and their threats. Our Sunni brothers must be audacious and revolt against the terrorists. They must also stop those who try to provoke terror and killing in the name of the Sunnis. I think that there are wise figures among the Sunnis that understand that fact very well.

May god bless the martyrs of Iraq. May god bless every effort to build the new Iraq."

- ¶B. "Epidemic of the century" (7/24)

As-Sabah (independent) published a front-page editorial by Jum'a Al-Hilfi about terrorism:

"Terrorism has no home, no identity and no address. It is a disease and every human everywhere is in danger because terrorism has a human form and the human form has caught the disease.

How else can we explain this epidemic of terrorism? How else do we explain the terrorist who kills children, women and the elderly? How else do we explain the terrorists who kill themselves?

Those who allowed terrorism to grow in their country or who provided shelter, logistics and money for terrorism, must be waiting for their role. Somehow terrorism must be preparing the world for them.

Since terrorism is a disease it will always spread. People will either catch it or be killed by it. It targets us all. Nobody can be save from terrorism even if they supported it.

Indeed, terrorism has no loyalty and if we look at the past we can find good examples.

The late Egyptian president Anwar Al-Sadat allowed terrorism to grow in his country. He tried to use its power against Egyptian leftist groups. In the end, terrorism turned against him and killed Al-Sadat while he was sitting on his platform watching a parade. Furthermore, the Americans let terrorism grow in Afghanistan because the Taliban opposed the Soviet Union but they too fell in the same trap in the end. Terrorism is the epidemic of the century and it is not an easy to control such a disease. However, the world's leaders must find a way. They must come together and discuss how to treat and eradicate the epidemic of the century."

Khalilzad